

NATIONAL CANNERS ASSOCIATION



Information Letter



FOR N. C. A. MEMBERS

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Report Your Pack Promptly to the Census Bureau

Canners who have completed their 1928 pack of corn, green and wax beans, and tomatoes, and who have failed to report their packs to the Census Bureau, are earnestly urged to send in their schedules at once. If the schedules have been mislaid, application should be made to the Bureau immediately for the blanks on which to report the respective commodities.

Failure to return these schedules promptly will delay the publication of the pack statistics, and it is the desire of the Census Bureau to make these figures available to the industry at the earliest possible moment.

Second Survey of Corn, Pea and Tomato Stocks

The second survey of stocks of canned corn, peas, and tomatoes in the hands of canners, wholesale grocers and chain store grocers will be made in January by the U. S. Census Bureau.

Schedules will be mailed early in January and will call for figures on stocks as of December 31, 1928. The results of the survey will be made public by the Bureau at the earliest possible date.

In the first stock census conducted last January, the Census Bureau was given excellent cooperation by both canners and distributors. But compilation of the returns could have been completed earlier had the schedules been returned promptly by all canners and distributors. Just how early the statistics to be collected next January will become available will depend almost entirely on the individual members of the industry and trade.

Publication of the figures on stocks at the close of last year convinced canners and distributors not only that such a survey is practicable but also that a regular stock census will be of great value. With the second survey completed, the industry and trade will be able to compute quite accurately the consumption of canned corn, peas and tomatoes in 1928, thus providing figures on which to base operations for the year 1929.

Canners are urged to make preparations in advance of receipt of the Census Bureau schedules so that these schedules can be filled out and returned promptly.

Grocery Distribution Costs in Louisville to be Studied

In cooperation with the Retail Grocers Association of Louisville, Ky., and the Domestic Commerce Division of the Department of Commerce, the Foodstuffs Division has undertaken to analyze the cost of wholesale and retail distribution of groceries in the Louisville territory. A detailed cost analysis is to be made by classes and groups of wholesale and retail distributors, taking into account the cost of various services. The plan worked out by the Department calls for (1) a census of grocery distribution, including wholesale and retail outlets, their number, size, capital, annual gross sales, and turnover; (2) a study of operating expenses for all outlets; (3) cost analyses, by commodities and customers, for selected wholesale and retail outlets, to which the new grocery specialist of the Department is to devote particular attention; and (4) a study of the consumer market.

The consumer market study will be a housewife's survey based on interviews with buyers to determine consumer preferences in both goods and services. The facts sought in the personal canvass of consumers will include relation of purchases to family size; type of store utilized; desired changes in store arrangement; satisfaction with package types; information on purchases as influenced by brand, style of goods, recommendation of salesmen or others, and price; occupational influence; racial characteristics; income classification; effect of employed housewife and type of dwelling; number of meals prepared at home; storage facilities; quantities of specific items bought; and frequency of purchases.

The grocery specialist recently added to the staff of the Foodstuffs Division will cooperate with the Domestic Commerce Division. In addition he is making a special investigation of handling costs for canned products, by lines, types, and varieties, in connection with which a few wholesale and retail houses have been selected for detailed analysis.

Truck Crop Markets

Cold weather, which was experienced in the Middle West and Mountain States during the week ending November 3, did not materialize in the East. The entire produce trade seems hopeful of improvement in market conditions as soon as lower temperatures become general. At present, markets seem to be continuing a rather even trend.

A feature of the week's carlot shipment reports was the rapid increase in orange movement from Florida. About 700 carloads of oranges came from that State, as against 135 the week before and 315 a year ago. California's output decreased to 200 cars. Grapefruit shipments, on the other hand, fell considerably below the late October record. Movement of nearly all fruits and vegetables decreased, some lines falling sharply, and the total of 26 products was only 24,370 cars, or 6,000 less than the preceding week. Most of the decrease was in grapes, apples and potatoes.

Grape movement was rapidly decreasing. Output of California has approximated 66,000 cars, as against 71,000 to early November, 1927. The New York crop was cleaning up, and all eastern grape shipments were much below the preceding week's record. California still forwarded an average of 500 cars daily. Total from all States was about 4,000 cars, or 65 per cent more than during the same week last season.

It looks as if growers of Bermuda and Creole onions in the early-shipping districts plan to strengthen further the market position of onions by reducing their acreage from that of last season. The 1928 plantings in Louisiana, southern Texas, and southern California reached the high mark of 23,260 acres, or nearly 50 per cent more than the average plantings from 1924 to 1927. But a reduction of 10 per cent may be made for the coming season, so that the combined plantings in these three States is now forecast as 20,830 acres. California shows a sharp decrease, Texas about 10 per cent less than last season, while Louisiana probably will increase its onion acreage. Texas expects 15,430 acres.

Cabbage was selling slightly lower in the main shipping districts and in terminal markets. Shipments from New York State increased to 565 cars for the week, while Wisconsin output dropped to 330. Rains hindered haulings in Wisconsin, but, even so, the shipments from that section were twice those of the same period last fall. A total of 1,135 cars from 20 shipping States

compared with 770 cars from the same sources a year ago, partly as a result of the higher prices this season.

If sweet potato movement from Eastern Shore of Virginia continues at the recent rate of 400 cars weekly, it will not be long until the crop in that territory will become a negligible factor in the market. Production in Virginia is estimated about 650,000 bushels lighter than last season, and shipments of 5,290 cars to date were slightly greater than those to early November, 1927. Only 1,500 cars came from Virginia points after November 1 last season. Once the Virginia crop is out of the way, southern stock moves more freely and prices tend to advance somewhat.

Celery forwardings decreased to 465 cars, of which California originated 150, New York 170, and Michigan only 75. The decrease in Michigan was very sharp and sudden.

Commodity	CARLOT SHIPMENTS					Total last season to Nov. 5	Total last season
	Oct. 28- Nov. 3 1928	Oct. 21-27 1928	Oct. 30- Nov. 5 1927	Total this season to Nov. 3			
Apples, total	5,032	9,476	6,153	72,819	59,130	93,062	
Eastern	3,595	4,372	2,717	39,050	30,033	44,492	
Western	4,527	5,104	2,416	31,769	29,097	48,569	
Cabbage	1,138	1,330	798	28,890	27,542	29,067	
Carrots:							
1928 season	72	91	(a)	419	(a)	6,953	
1926 season	63	79	(a)	6,058	(a)	6,552	
Cauliflower	138	188	190	1,558	1,702	9,046	
Grapefruit:							
Domestic	434	716	408	2,336	2,212	16,206	
Imports	5	11	42	311	1,229	2,297	
Green peas	17	19	10	4,850	4,187	4,147	
Mixed deciduous fruits ..	29	42	41	6,194	5,395	5,408	
Mixed vegetables	226	336	330	29,253	31,092	35,050	
Pears	294	456	205	22,504	17,593	18,744	
Peppers	22	67	44	3,422	2,742	2,824	
Spinach	43	69	77	10,539	9,589	9,653	
String beans:							
1928 season	3	9	79	3	99	6,467	
1927 season	92	127	155	6,467	6,835	6,481	
Tomatoes	402	545	408	29,140	32,113	32,661	

(a) Unavailable

Business Conditions

The volume of business during the week ended November 3, as seen from check payments, was somewhat smaller than in the previous week but was larger than a year ago, according to the weekly statement of the Department of Commerce. The general index of wholesale prices again receded from the preceding week but was still above the corresponding period of last year.

Interest rates for time funds showed no change from the previous week but were higher than last year. Interest rates for call money averaged higher than in either prior period. Stock prices receded from the high level of the preceding week but were

still considerably above the level of last year. Freight-car loadings for the latest available week were larger than in the corresponding period of 1927.

CAR LOADINGS

	Total	Miscellaneous	Merchandise L. C. L.	Other
Week ended October 27	1,161,976	436,301	269,174	456,501
Preceding week	1,102,093	462,714	269,584	429,797
Corresponding week, 1927	1,112,816	446,736	268,518	497,542
Corresponding week, 1926	1,308,878	453,822	271,328	482,228

Truck Crop Prospects

The condition of various truck crops in commercial areas on November 1, 1928, as compared with November 1, 1927, as reported by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, was as follows:

	Nov. 1, 1927 Per cent	Nov. 1, 1928 Per cent
Snap beans (Cal., Fla., La., Md., N. C., S. C., Tex., Va.)	70	64
Cabbage (Cal., La., S. C., Tex., Va.)	74	81
Spinach (Cal., La., S. C., Md., Tex., Va.)	83	80
Beets (Tex.)	74	66
Carrots (Cal., La., Tex.)	84	79
Cauliflower (Cal.)	98	89
Celery (Cal., Fla.)	84	88
Lettuce (Cal., Fla.)	89	84
Peas (Cal., Fla., Tex.)	—	81
Peppers (Cal., Fla.)	89	77
Tomatoes (Cal., Fla., Tex.)	—	77

Estimates of the production of various truck crops for the 1928-29 season compared with the previous season are as follows:

	1927-28	1928-29
Carrots (Cal.)	bushels 1,166,000	1,484,000
Cauliflower (Cal.)	crates 1,386,000	1,368,000
Peas (Cal., Imperial)	hampers 280,000	483,000
Spinach (Md., Va.)	bushels 2,065,000	1,898,000
Tomatoes (Tex.)	bushels 34,000	98,000

The intended fall tomato acreage on the Florida East Coast is estimated at 12,000 acres as compared with 11,000 acres last year.

In California there is every indication of an enormous increase in the carrot acreage for February, March and April harvest. Imperial Valley peas are expected to have high yields and good quality, with shipments starting about November 10. Condition of fall tomatoes has lowered slightly since October 15. The production of pimientos for canning is forecast at 12,110 tons, as compared with 10,475 tons in 1927-28.

Making Campaign for Better Car Loading

The first of a series of loading bulletins designed to secure greater efficiency and economy in the use of freight cars has

been issued by the Car Service Division of the American Railway Association. The pamphlet gives a record of the tons per car secured in 1927, compared with the best previous record loading of the various commodities. In 1927 for 35 of the 69 commodities, loadings reported were as heavy as, or heavier than, in any other year since 1922.

The average loading for all commodities in 1927 was 35.1 tons per car, which is a new high record. The record for all canned foods products in 1927 was 23 tons per car, and this, too, is the best record yet made for this class of products.

The pamphlet points out that had the loadings of all commodities in 1927 been increased by one ton per car, it would have required 945,273 fewer cars to move the same quantity.

Cuba to Bar Spanish Sardines Packed in Peanut Oil

The Cuban Department of Sanitation, having been informed that the Spanish Government has issued an order permitting the use of peanut oil in the preservation of fish for export, will apply to fish imported from Spain the provisions of Decree No. 1486 of September 14, 1926, which prohibits the sale of inferior articles manufactured exclusively for export, sale of which is prohibited in the country in which they are manufactured, according to a report from the American Consul at Havana.

Canned Fruit Shipments from Porto Rico

Shipments of agricultural products from Porto Rico to the United States showed a considerable decline during the first quarter of the fiscal year beginning July 1, 1928, from those of the first quarter of the previous fiscal year, according to a report from the office of the Trade Commissioner at San Juan. Declines were noted in shipments of fresh fruits, but the quantity and value of canned fruits showed an increase over shipments of last year. The following table gives the shipments of canned grapefruit and pineapple for July, August and September, 1927 and 1928:

		1927	1928
Canned grapefruit			
Pounds	.....	822,049	1,167,417
Value	.....	\$87,715	\$109,239
Canned pineapple:			
Pounds	.....	412,875	686,614
Value	.....	\$27,937	\$45,339

Rates on Bottled Grape Juice to be Readjusted

Readjustment of freight rates on unfermented grape juice in glass bottles packed in boxes and barrels through a large part

of the United States has been ordered by the Interstate Commerce Commission, effective January 5, 1929, on the basis of complaints filed in Docket No. 16526. The Commission finds that the present rates and ratings are not unreasonable or otherwise unlawful, except that the less-than-carload ratings in the official (eastern) classification, and the carload ratings in the western classification, and the rates applied under those ratings, are, and for the future will be, respectively unreasonable to the extent that they exceed second class and Class A. These findings, the report says, will result in a substantial readjustment of rates particularly from, to, and within the Southwest.

The present rates are those of the first class in official and second class in southern and western classifications in less than carloads, and fourth class in official and western, and fifth class in southern classification, in carloads.

New Horticultural Office in Department of Agriculture

Dr. Eugene C. Auchter of the University of Maryland has been appointed Principal Horticulturist in the U. S. Department of Agriculture to take charge of the newly created office of Horticultural Crops and Diseases. He will assume general supervision not only of the vegetable gardening, pomological, and related lines of the present Office of Horticulture, but also of the physiological project of the Office of Plant Geography and Physiology, as well as the work of the Pathological Laboratory and of the Office of Vegetable and Forage Diseases, and the entire Office of Fruit Diseases and the Office of Crop Physiology and Breeding.

Grouping these related offices under one head, it is believed, will facilitate the cooperative research upon the many complicated problems of horticulture, not only among the specialists of the new organization but also with the specialists of the State agricultural experiment stations and of the horticultural industries. The total budget for the new organization is approximately \$1,000,000 annually.

German Prune Imports

German imports of prunes during 1927-28 amounted to 74,614,000 pounds as compared with 68,790,000 pounds in 1926-27. Imports from the United States increased by over 100 per cent, while those from Yugoslavia declined by more than 50 per cent. The United States during the past season supplied 77 per cent of the total and Yugoslavia 21 per cent.

Bulletin Issued on Peach Borer

A study of the peach borer has been issued by the U. S. Department of Agriculture as Farmers' Bulletin No. 1245. Damages from the activities of this pest, it is stated, approximate \$6,000,000 annually.

New Device for Seed Counting

To improve the accuracy and ease of sampling and testing seeds for germination, scientists in the Bureau of Plant Industry of the U. S. Department of Agriculture have devised a simple mechanical counter that operates with the aid of a partial vacuum. The instrument is used in making the plantings for germination tests. The counter is not patented and there is no restriction on its manufacture or use. The device is illustrated and explained in Circular No. 53-C, "A Seed Counter," copies of which may be obtained free on application to the Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C.

Methods of Applying Fertilizers Compared

Relative merits of hill and broadcast applications of sweet-corn fertilizer have been studied by the Illinois Agricultural Experiment Station during the past year, according to its annual report. In the main the tests confirm earlier reports that commercial fertilizers pay when used on sweet corn for the canning factory, even if there is clover once every four years in the rotation. Both superphosphate (acid phosphate) and potash are needed the first and second year after clover. Where there is no clover in the rotation, the need for supplemental plant food is even greater.

Broadcasting such fertilizers has considerable merit but is open to several objections. On the other hand, hill applications have, in the past, brought more of an increase in yield, although it is still doubtful whether yields can be maintained in this way. The more important objections to broadcasting are the cost of the fertilizer, which is \$7 to \$9 an acre, and the extra labor needed to apply it. Farmers and canners are in favor of using fertilizers, but prefer to do it in hill applications at the time of planting. This method involves very little labor. The quantities of fertilizer applied are small, the newer types of fertilizer drill attachments are both cheap and efficient, and the fertilizer is placed where it becomes immediately available to the seedling.